

US DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE  
FOREST SERVICE

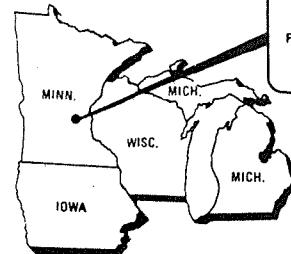
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*Northeastern Area*  
**State & Private Forestry**  
**DIVISION OF FOREST PEST CONTROL**

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ASPEN DEFOLIATION BY THE LARGE ASPEN TORTRIX  
ON THE NICOLET NATIONAL FOREST, WISCONSIN

By Glen Erickson

#### INTRODUCTION

Aspen defoliation was first reported in 1969 and was widespread throughout the Forest in 1970.

#### METHODS

The survey was flown June 18, 1970, in the Forest Service Aero-Commander to delineate the defoliated area. Flight lines were in a north-south direction; in parallel lines 4 miles apart; 1000 feet above the ground; at 120 mph. Defoliation was classed as moderate to heavy--tree canopy estimated having 50%+ defoliation.

A ground survey followed the aerial survey to confirm the cause and degree of defoliation.

#### RESULTS

Moderate to heavy defoliation occurred in all aspen stands within the survey area. Heavy defoliation was confined to scattered groups of trees up to approximately 200 acres extent.

Observations 6 weeks later during other field work showed only light refoliation in stands located in T33N and 34N, R15W and 16W.

Continued successive heavy defoliation can cause general tree weakening. This predisposes the trees to attack by various species of wood borers, which cause eventual mortality and provide sites for invasion of disease organisms.

